

Under these circumstances, it is surely not unrealistic to look forward to an increasingly vigorous growth in our North, and to anticipate more change there in the next decade or two than has taken place in the entire three centuries of its history. As in the past, we shall witness the unrolling of the frontier northward from southern Canada, but on a larger scale and at a somewhat faster pace. New transportation roads will be carved through the wilderness and will fan out throughout much of the continental interior. New mining and marketing communities will spring up and prosper, stimulating a demand for secondary industries, and public services. Employment opportunities will multiply and become more varied, necessitating more schools and more hospitals. Altogether, the land and the people just beyond the already developed areas of Canada can look confidently forward to an expanding share of our national prosperity.

For the Far North too, the future is bright. There however we foresee a difference. Development may not come up from the south - at least not directly - but start at the seacoast. Water, not land, will form the link with outside markets. The eastern Arctic may perhaps evolve earlier than the western, but this notwithstanding, Canada's northern seacoast, its third, will begin to come into its own.

In the farthest north part of our country, however, growth will be more spotty than farther south. Some coastal lands will prove more attractive than others. Not all will be equally accessible. Some existing communities may benefit, while others will certainly perish. Interest in the region is so new that it is still almost impossible to predict what exactly will happen. At this stage, however, one must assume that the governmental and military communities we have set up already will continue to exist, and that present mining towns will survive as long as their activities remain profitable. Less bright are the prospects for many small places which lean heavily upon missionary activity or the fur trade. Many of them have already outlived their usefulness, and unless they find new economic activities they may soon go out of existence. In their place, will arise new communities, predominantly mining ones, attuned to the economic interests of the present and the future, not those of the past. Where today we can count only one small producing mine on tidewater in the North, tomorrow there will be several. Where now only a handful of natives enjoy steady employment the years to come will see a substantial labor force; and awakening Northlands that today lack the strength for provincial responsibility will one day provide us with new provinces.

That, in a nutshell, is the economic present and future of nine-tenths of our country - our Canadian North.